4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P. 73-a]

443 438 professional traders gather at Patamban to buy pottery for the various Sunday markets.

Besides the regular weekly markets, in practically every village lively trading accompanies the annual religious or semi-religious celebrations. In some instances such markets are large enough to be termed fairs. Commercially, the most important of the annual fiestas is the pueblo's saint's day, attended by traders and villagers from miles around. Other fiesta markets occur during the Corpus Christi, Easter, and Christmas celebrations. Often a particular village, such as San Juan Parangaricutiro, holds special religious (and commercial) festivals to honor a special saint or miraculous event.[185]

437 Trading in the market is done mainly on a monetary basis. Little outright bartering takes place. An interesting exception occurs at Erongaricuaro, where wives of fishermen exchange baskets of fresh or dried fish for piles of firewood carried in from the Sierra. Another instance of barter takes place at the Patamban market; there, women from the Pamatácuaro *ranchos* trade tamales for pottery and fruit.

443 The market takes place in the town plaza, and when the number of traders is exceptionally large, some sellers are crowded off into adjoining streets. Each vendor pays the municipal authorities the [651] *piso de plaza*, or tax for the use of a small selling space on the sidewalk. By custom, stalls are segregated according to the type of article sold, pottery being dispensed in one section of the plaza, foods in another, etc. (pl. 14). (See illustration of Chilchota market *in* Beals, 1946, p. 84.) Except in special markets, such as Patamban, the number of merchants of fruit and vegetables exceeds all others. (See Beals, 1946, p. 82.) Moreover, in the large towns professional mestizo vendors of factory-made clothing, hardware, etc. are numerous, while the Indians selling handicrafts are relatively few.[186] The Pátzcuaro, Erongaricuaro, and Paracho markets, on the other hand, are composed of a much larger percentage of native traders.

444 **The village stores.**—Almost without exception every Tarascan village boasts of at least one store

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[185] Of interest are the Palm Sunday (*Ramos*) fairs held in Peribán, Zamora, Uruapan, and Pátzcuaro. Exchange of *tierra caliente* and *tierra fría* products [443] is particularly significant at these markets.

[438] [186] At the *Ramos* fair at Peribán (April 14, 1946) at least three-quarters of the selling space was occupied by tropical fruit vendors and sellers of factory-

444 which handles mainly staple food imports (salted dried beef, dried fish, salt, piloncillo, lard, beans, and wheat flour) and beverages (soft drinks, beer, and hard liquors). A small assortment of canned goods can be purchased in the stores of the larger towns. Often other items, such as cigarettes, kerosene, and metal household ware, are carried. In the small villages stores are customarily operated by well-to-do Tarascan families, often by the wife and children, while the man farms.[157] In the large pueblos the storekeepers are usually mestizos who have moved in from neighboring towns.[158] [477] Significantly, the infiltration of Spanish-speaking storekeepers into indigenous towns often represents one of the initial steps toward hispanicization of the native population.[159]

443 **The professional traders.**—The *huacalero* (inspikuiiri, or "one who trades") represents the last vestige of the ancient Indian carriers (*tamemes*), formerly important agents of distribution throughout Mexico. Few such traveling merchants, each of whom carries his wares in a wooden crate (*huacal*, kópaɪakua) tied to his back, remain; the majority have been displaced by burro and motor transportation. As late as 1900 large 443 numbers of Tarascan *huacaleros* from many 439 Sierra villages carried handicrafts into the Balsas Basin, the coast of Guerrero, and Colima and returned with tropical fruit, salt, and cheese. Today about 15 *huacaleros* operate out of Pamatácuaro, carrying locally made wooden spoons and *bateas*, Patamban pottery, *morrales* from

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[438] made goods from Zamora, Guadalajara, Morelia, and México. Regional handicrafts were represented as follows:

[443]

Article:	Origin	Vendors (number)
Blankets	Cherapan	10 walking vendors.
Blankets	Jiquilpan	1 stall.
Rebozos	Paracho	1 stall.
Women's belts	Nahuatzen	1 stall.
Straw hats	Apo	1 stall.
Agave rope	Tarecuato	2 stalls.
Pottery	Patamban	12 stalls.
Pottery	Santa Fé	1 stall.
Pottery	San Juan Tlaquepaque (Jalisco).	1 stall.
Wooden tops	Paracho	1 stall.
Wicker baskets	Tangamandapio	1 stall.
Huaraches	Los Reyes	3 stalls.
Huaraches	Puríbán	1 stall.

[157] Cherán, as Beals points out (1946, p. 79), is unique in that, although it is the largest Tarascan town, the storekeepers are Tarascan.

[158] For example, although Tarecuato is almost wholly native in speech, its three or four stores are operated by mestizos. Merchants of Paracho, Patamban, and Nahuatzen are all mestizo.

[159] Apart from its distributive function, the village store (mestizo or indigenous) frequently serves as the only readily accessible public place where a stranger may introduce himself and ask questions about the town. Except in the municipal seats, the town officials, all of whom hold nonremunerative posts, are rarely found in the juzgado, or town hall